

Appendix D. Student Interview Questions



When necessary, student interviews can be an important part of the review process. They can provide reviewers with valuable information about the administration of the Title IV programs at an institution. We have assembled some student interview questions to help reviewers target problem areas during a program review. They can identify problems and systemic deficiencies not readily apparent in a file review alone. **These questions are not intended to be all-inclusive. Reviewers must use their professional judgement in the type of questions being asked, and expand or focus the questioning when necessary to concentrate on areas of concern disclosed by the answers to other questions.**

A student interview may be conducted at the school location or at another location away from the school. Many students feel more comfortable discussing problems when they are away from the school. Interviews may also be conducted on the telephone. If reviewers discover unusual documents or discrepancies during a file review, reviewers may wish to ask the student about that particular issue. If student complaints were one of the factors for the program review, interviews can help clarify the problems.

All interviews must be completely documented for future reference.

Name
Program of Study
Award Years Enrolled/Status
(Freshman, Sophomore, etc.)
Date of Withdrawal/Graduation
Date/Time of Interview

The following questions are suggested for this interview process:

(NOTE: Some questions may be more applicable depending upon the type of institution the student is attending.)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Ask for name, date of birth, social security number (it helps to confirm whom you spoke to).

Are you a U.S. citizen? If not, are you a permanent resident of the U.S.?

Do you have a college degree, even from a school outside the U.S.? If so, what kind of degree?

Do you have a high school diploma or GED? If not, what type of admissions test did you take and who administered the test? Someone from inside or outside the school?

Male/female?

Are you currently enrolled in high school?

If you took an admissions test, did anyone help you complete the test? Was the test timed? How many times did you take the test? If more than once, was it the same test?

Have you attended any other postsecondary institution?

If so, did you receive any federal funds there? Have you ever defaulted on any federal student loan or do you owe a refund on any federal assistance you received?

When did you start school here?

What program (course) are you enrolled in?

What do you expect this course to prepare you to do? How much money do you expect to make? What kind of job do you expect to get?

-What type of federal aid did you apply for at this school? Did anyone in the financial aid office help you fill out the applications? Did you need to use any tax returns or other documents to fill out the applications?

-Do you live with your parents, on campus, or on your own? Do you have any special circumstances that you discussed with school officials about your ability to pay for school?

-Did someone tell you how much federal funds you could expect to receive and when?

-What type of federal aid have you received? How did you receive it? (Via a disbursement check or by the school crediting your account?)

-Were you told how much of your own money you might have to pay for school expenses?

-Have you given the school written permission to hold any excess federal funds to pay for tuition and fees or help budget your aid?

-Have you received all the books, equipment and supplies you should have received, and for which you have been charged?

- Are you aware of the school's satisfactory academic progress standards? Have you had any academic problems? What are your grades? Have you ever been put on probation? Have you ever appealed a decision to terminate your enrollment based on your grades?
- Have you had to take any long periods of time off from school because of health or other problems? How long? Did you have to fill out a form to request approval to take time off? Did anyone counsel you about how long you could take off, and whether this would affect your grades or awards? (Determine whether student took LOA or dropped out.)

For students in clock-hour programs:

- What are your class times; do teachers usually keep to those hours?
- How is attendance taken? Have them be specific.
- Do you get unscheduled days off?
- Is the teacher usually present during class or are you given a lot of self-directed assignments to do in class?
- Do you know if there is an attendance policy about missing too many hours?
- What happens if you miss class; are you allowed to make-up classes? How are they handled? Teachers giving instruction or given assignments?
- How is attendance taken for make-up hours?
- Were you given make-up credit for homework assignments?
- If no longer enrolled at school, does the student remember the last date of attendance? Use a significant event or a holiday to jog their memory.
- Did you receive notification of any refund made to your loan? Was a refund paid on your loan?
- Did you sign a repayment agreement? Did you receive a copy of that agreement?
- Did you receive counseling about loan obligations/repayment after you withdrew/graduated?
- How did you hear about this school?
- Did you talk to a sales representative?
- Were you given any incentive to enroll in this school?
- Were you promised anything as a reward for completing the program?
- Were you informed about the placement and completion rates prior to enrolling?
- What kind of other information were you provided describing the school, its programs, costs & financial aid, etc. before you enrolled at this school?
- Did you receive any information about campus crime (new info given out each year)?
- Do you feel that information you were given was accurate?

INDEPENDENT/DEPENDENT STATUS

(A “yes” answer to any one of questions 2-6, or being 24 years old when filing the application indicates an independent student)

1. What is your age?
2. Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
3. Are you a graduate or professional student?
4. Are you married?
5. Are you a ward of the court or are both of your parents deceased?
6. Do you have legal dependents other than a spouse?

VERIFICATION

1. Was your application for federal aid selected for verification?
2. What type of additional information were you asked to give to the financial aid office?
3. Did they clearly tell you what you needed to bring in, the timeframe to bring it to them, and what would occur if you did not bring in the additional paperwork?
4. Did someone help you fill out the forms or tell you what to write?
5. Did your award change because of the verification process? If so, was it a greater or lesser amount?

FEDERAL FAMILY EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAMS

- When did you fill out your FFEL application?
- Did anyone help you fill out the application?
- How did you decide how much money to apply for on the loan application?
- Did you choose the lender, or did the school?
- Were you offered any incentive to get a student loan through that lender?
- Did you receive any counseling before you received your first disbursement? In-person counseling?
- Do you know how your loan disbursements were made (check to student, check to school, wire transfer)?
- Did you sign the loan check, and was the check made out just to you, or co-payable to you and the institution? Or were you notified that loan funds were received and credited to your account? Were you told that you could choose to cancel the portion of the loan disbursement?
- Did you receive a copy of your promissory note/application?

DIRECT LOAN QUESTIONS

- When did you sign your promissory notes?
- Have you received notification each term that your loan funds have been disbursed? How was the notification delivered? Were you told that you could choose to cancel the portion of the loan disbursement?

-Did you receive any counseling before you received your first disbursement? In-person counseling?

FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN PROGRAM

1. When did you sign your promissory note? Did you receive a copy of it?
2. Did you receive any counseling before you received your first disbursement? In-person counseling?
3. How many advances did you get?
4. When did you sign for your advances?
5. How did you receive your advances?

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

1. What type of work are you performing? Is the job on or off campus?
2. Do you fill out timesheets for the times you work?
3. Does your supervisor monitor your work performance?
4. Does your supervisor certify the timesheets?
5. Do you work part-time or full-time?
6. How are you paid for the time you work? In a paycheck? Does the school credit your account?
7. How many hours do you usually work in a day, do you get breaks?
8. Do you ever have class/work conflicts (asked to work during scheduled class time)?

SPECIAL ISSUE QUESTIONS

1. If the student is enrolled in an ESL-only program, ask if he or she has a pre-existing job skill. What is it? Describe?
2. If the student is enrolled in a combined ESL and regular program, ask if student was told that he or she only had to complete the ESL portion.
3. Do you have any additional comments, positive or negative?